

**TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FISCAL REVIEW COMMITTEE**



FISCAL NOTE

SB 281 - HB 231

February 15, 2011

SUMMARY OF BILL: Requires the General Assembly to create five contiguous judicial districts for the election of Tennessee Supreme Court justices, with no more than two districts in any of the Grand Divisions. Requires Supreme Court justices to be elected to a full eight-year term in nonpartisan contested elections beginning August 2014 and every eight years thereafter, with a procedure established for filling vacancies on the Court. Prohibits candidates from personally soliciting or accepting campaign contributions and prohibits campaign treasurers from divulging the contributors' names or amounts contributed. Establishes qualifications and residency requirements for candidates and requires the concurrence of three judges to a decision in every case. Defines, for the purposes of the Judicial Nomination and Performance Evaluation, "appellate courts" as the Court of Appeals and Court of Criminal Appeals.

ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT:

Decrease State Expenditures - \$16,500/FY 13-14 and Every 8th Year Thereafter

Assumptions:

- According to the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), establishing nonpartisan contested elections for Supreme Court judges would eliminate retention election evaluations performed by the Judicial Performance Evaluation Commission every eight years at an approximate cost of \$3,301 per judge, resulting in a total decrease in state expenditures of \$16,507 beginning in FY13-14 and every eighth year thereafter.
- Any increase in state expenditures for ballot modifications is estimated to be not significant.

CERTIFICATION:

The information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "James W. White".

James W. White, Executive Director

/lsc